BUDGET RESOLUTION/Reimbursement for Voter Registration Mandates

SUBJECT: Senate Concurrent Budget Resolution for fiscal years 1996-2002 . . . S. Con. Res. 13. Coverdell amendment No. 1152.

ACTION: AMENDMENT AGREED TO, 51-49

SYNOPSIS: As reported, S. Con. Res. 13, the fiscal year 1996 Concurrent Budget Resolution, will reduce projected spending over 7 years to balance the budget by fiscal year (FY) 2002 without increasing taxes. Savings that will accrue from lower debt service payments (an estimated \$170 billion) will be dedicated to a reserve fund, which may be used for tax reductions after enactment of laws to ensure a balanced budget. Highlights include the following: the rate of growth in Medicare will be slowed to 7.1 percent; Medicaid's rate of growth will be slowed to 5 percent and it will be transformed into a block grant program; the Commerce Department and more than 100 other Federal programs, agencies, and commissions will be eliminated; welfare and housing programs will be reformed; agriculture, energy, and transportation subsidies will be cut; foreign aid will be cut; defense spending will be cut and then allowed to increase back to its 1995 level; and Social Security will not be altered.

The Coverdell amendment would express the sense of the Senate that "within the assumptions under budget function 800 funds will be spent for reimbursement to the States for the costs of implementing the National Voter Registration Act of 1993."

The amendment was offered after all debate time had expired. However, some statements on amendments were added to the record or were made before the amendments were offered and before debate time had expired. Also, by unanimous consent, 1 minute of time was allowed on each amendment for explanatory statements before each vote.

No arguments were expressed in favor of the amendment.

Those opposing the amendment contended:

Since the implementation of the National Voter Registration Act in January, 2 million new voters have been registered. According

(See other side)

YEAS (51)				NAYS (49)			NOT VOTING (0)	
Republicans Democrats (50 or 93%) (1 or 2%)		***************************************		mocrats or 98%)	Republicans (0)	Democrats (0)		
Abraham Bennett Bond Brown Burns Campbell Coats Cochran Cohen Coverdell Craig D'Amato DeWine Domenici Faircloth Frist Gorton Gramm Grams Grassley Gregg Hatch Helms Hutchison	Inhofe Kassebaum Kempthorne Kyl Lott Lugar Mack McCain McConnell Murkowski Nickles Packwood Pressler Roth Santorum Shelby Simpson Smith Snowe Specter Stevens Thomas Thompson Thurmond Warner	Kohl	Ashcroft Chafee Hatfield Jeffords	Akaka Baucus Biden Bingaman Boxer Bradley Breaux Bryan Bumpers Byrd Conrad Daschle Dodd Dorgan Exon Feingold Feinstein Ford Glenn Graham Harkin Heflin	Hollings Inouye Johnston Kennedy Kerrey Kerry Lautenberg Leahy Levin Lieberman Mikulski Moseley-Braun Moynihan Murray Nunn Pell Pryor Reid Robb Rockefeller Sarbanes Simon Wellstone	EXPLANAT 1—Official I 2—Necessar 3—Illness 4—Other SYMBOLS: AY—Annou AN—Annou PY—Paired PN—Paired	ily Absent inced Yea inced Nay Yea	

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to the National Motor-Voter Coalition, approximately 20 million new voters will be registered by the 1996 presidential election. The cost of this program is minimal. According to a Congressional Budget Office study, States will incur an annual cost of \$20 million to \$25 million from implementing this Act. The Unfunded Mandates bill we passed earlier this year does not require the Federal Government to provide reimbursement for such minimal costs. Further, States have an obligation to meet the standards of accessibility and ballot integrity that are set by the National Voter Registration Act, with or without Federal funding. We therefore urge the rejection of this amendment.